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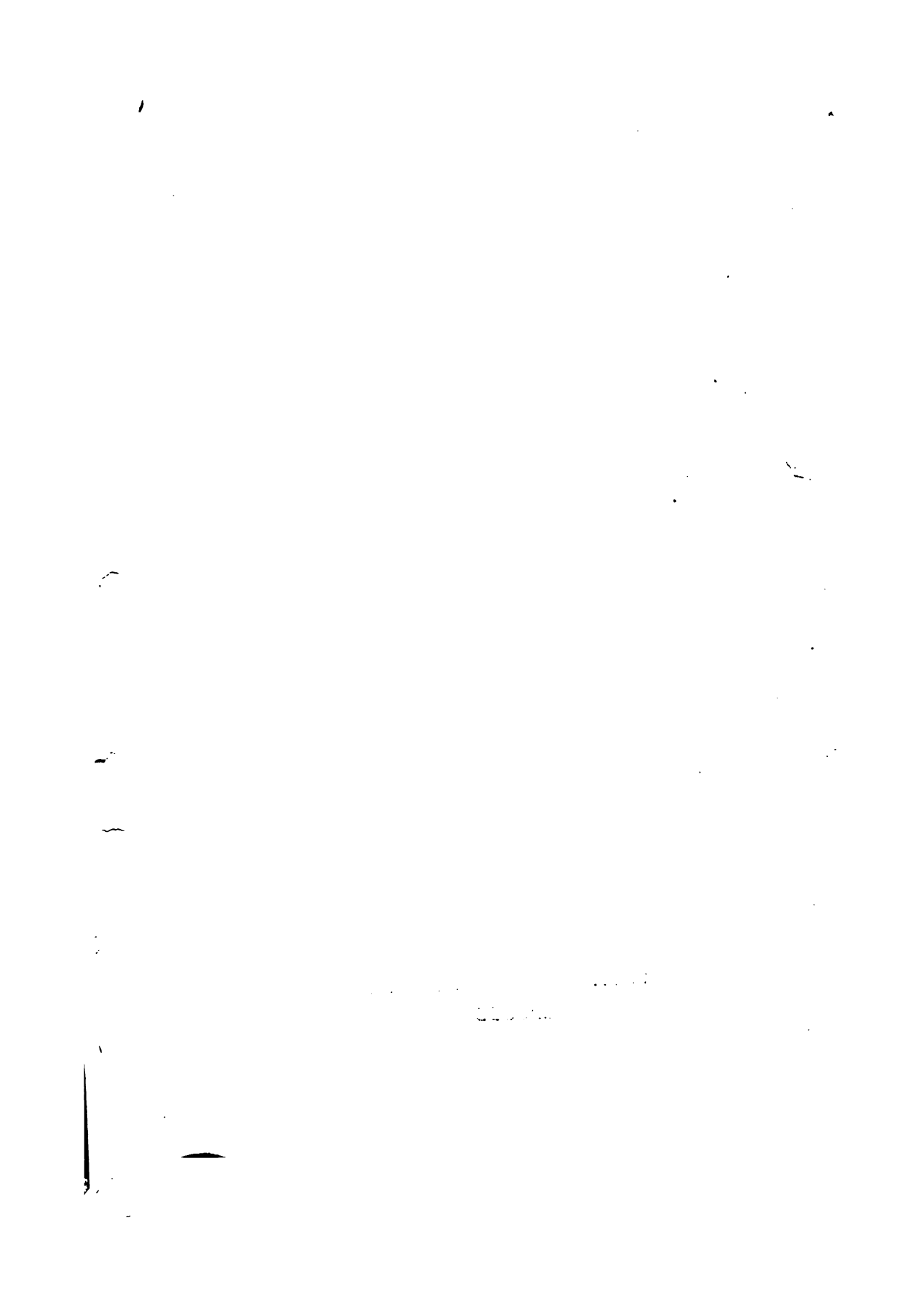
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COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE

THE last weeks of a Senior resemble in one respect the first weeks of a Freshman: they are too complexly active, too bewildering, for thought. Professors, examinations, literary work, friendships, relatives, sweet-hearts, and plans of life whirl through a Senior's head and set it whirling with them. Then, as always, after exaltation comes depression. Clearing up after anything is a searching test of cheerfulness; and clearing up after four of the richest years that youth can know, sending away your furniture from the room you love, bidding good-by to scores of fellow students whose lives have been very near your own, and doing it all with the reactionary weariness that follows prolonged excitement, is sad business, even for a sound-minded girl who is eager to do her part in a newly opening world. On the morning after Class Day in Cambridge, some years ago, an uncommonly healthy Senior who had played in the University football team and who could not be charged with maudlin sentiment, got up at five, sat on the steps of University Hall in the middle of the College Yard, and wept. Before he went away, he said, he must have the Yard for once to himself: —

“'T were profanation of our joys
To tell the laity our love.”

In this reaction, when you have shuffled off the coil of your last college days and find yourself face to face with a new life or with the return to an old one, you are prone to ask, "What has it all been for? Am I fitter for the life I must live than if I had been living it four years already? College has been fascinating, no doubt; but many fascinating things do not pay. I have opened several doors to knowledge, and have learned that, work as hard and as long as I may, I can never see the thousandth part of that to which a single one of them may lead; I have formed friendships that will last; I have won something with which I would not part for money and without which I can no more imagine myself than I can conceive myself annihilated. These college years have become an inextricable part of me; yet am I, after all, happier and better than if I had never tasted their sweetness — had never caught glimpses of ideals that in every-day life may be my rebuke and my despair?" In a small degree you feel as men and women feel when they wake to the truth that their elders have moved on; that they themselves are now the older generation to whom the younger turns for counsel; that other people will lean on them, and that the days when they may lean on other people are gone and gone forever.

When we say "What is it for?" let us first take care to recognize, as college people should, many things for which a life is worth living besides what is commonly called practical. Lowell reminds us that the question "What is it good for?" "would abolish the rose and be answered triumphantly by the cabbage."

"The danger of the prosaic type of mind," he adds, "lies in the stolid sense of superiority which blinds it to everything ideal, to the use of anything that does not serve the practical purposes of life." Now a man whose scheme of life is a cabbage scheme, who can go through college with no glimpse of the vision without which all is dark and dead, is too abnormal for our purposes to-day: and if this is true of a man, it is truer of a woman; for in every part of life women take more kindly to the ideal. Yet if a college graduate tries to earn a living by raising cabbages, or by keeping hens, or by any other unimaginative occupation, I believe (so deep is my faith in college training) that he or she will make up, even in such a prosaic field, for the years that might seem lost. "They jump farthest," says Ben Jonson, "that fetch their race largest." President Hyde has pointed out that the apparent delaying of a life work by the years at college is like the stopping of a stream by a dam to give it accumulated power. He speaks of men; but what he says applies to women also. Those persons who disparage a college education for men point to the self-made men of business who have climbed high: but of these self-made men the best openly express as the great regret of their lives their want of a college education; and of the worst, many, I suspect, grieve in their heart of hearts for the education they decry. They think perhaps of social advantage, of culture, of knowledge; they might well think also of the grasp of a trained mind and of the wisdom that should come with a wider outlook. Those who disparage a college education for women go fur-

ther and wound deeper. "To a woman," they say, "such an education is a social *disadvantage*; for it spoils her. The ideal of manhood is one thing, that of womanhood another. Learning and the learned professions are for men; public life is for men. It remains for women to make themselves charming through their accomplishments and to live in their affections. A masculine woman is as bad as an effeminate man; and a pedantic woman is worse than either. Moreover, studying mars beauty, for which every woman longs, whether she admits it or not, and to which every man, whatever he may say, pays gratifying homage." All this has been said so often that I hesitate to repeat it; yet, however familiar it is, and however false it may be, it raises a question that is vital. "In college study," said a great man, "it seems conclusively proved that women can do all that men can do — we do not yet know at what sacrifice." Is there necessarily a sacrifice?

First, as to pedantry. No doubt we have all seen young women in whom college education developed a pedantry to which they were predisposed; and we have seen just such young men. Yet among the agents for knocking pedantry out of young people I should count college life. In college if we appear pedantic, our friends contrive to tell us so in ways hard to forget; and besides, the more we know, the more we know we don't know. Just as the study of Anglo-Saxon is the best remedy for mistaken purism, so in every part of learning, one good look at the mountains of knowledge, however far away, shows us pedantry and dogmatism

as the miserable little molehills that they really are. After all, learning is no necessary part of the equipment of a pedant. Mr. Casaubon was no more a pedant than Mr. Micawber, nor Anna Comnena than Mrs. Malaprop. Nor are masculine women commoner in college than out of it; there is no sex in learning and nothing ungente. Nor does college study, mingled with the out of door life in a place like this, hurt either complexion or constitution so much as parties and theatre-going. I doubt whether any one of you has ever lived or will ever live a healthier life than she has lived here, or a life of higher and more womanly ideals. One girl means to be a teacher; another, though not a teacher or anything with a distinct name, means to be an alert, intelligent, helpful member of society. Each comes to college that, working and playing with other girls both like and unlike herself, she may look wider and deeper over and into human life, — not that she may be less womanly, but that she may be more of a woman. If now and then the love of learning and the discovery of scholarly talent lead a girl to give up all thought of a domestic life, it is not pedantry or masculinity; it is rather the deliberate dedication of her strength to what she believes to be its fitting service. "I shall never forget," said a college boy, "the way Professor X talked of ethics — as if ethics were his daughter." This is the way some women feel about learning, or philanthropy, or any other great cause to which they give their lives; and who shall say that they are wrong?

The one serious danger which I can see in a college

education for women is the danger of intellectual unrest, of chafing, in the daily duties of later life, at the meagreness of intellectual opportunity. A man, even by those who regard his college life as an essential social experience to be achieved with the least possible study, is expected on leaving college to get work at once. A woman is expected to get it if there is nobody to support her: otherwise she may go home and may find between her college life and the home life that she reënters a perilous gap. Suppose she goes out into what is called society. After four years of steady employment, of constant, stimulating friendship, of high intellectual privilege, and of rapid growth in taste and knowledge, how mean and wearisome and inexcusable seems the round of parties and calls, how cheap much of what she used to regard as intellectual! She may have to live in a town where the leading thinkers discuss the attributes of "the pagan god Ze'us" and find the highest achievement of literature in the chariot race from "Ben Hur." How shall she adjust herself to such a life as this? how live in it with modest strength? Or suppose her parents are country people and she goes home to help her mother. Disgusted with herself as she may be at the discovery, she may find that her family, though no less lovable than of old, are, for steady company, less interesting. As President Eliot says of university football players after a great contest, "the return to normal life is difficult;" or—to cite and adapt the words of another man—"She has looked her last upon the world of art and literature and intellectual delight, within whose borders

she has been permitted to dwell for four years, tasting of the pleasures that are not her birthright."

Or suppose a girl teaches school and finds herself in a remote town where she is sandwiched between crude children on one side and a half-educated superintendent and several illiterate committee men on the other — a town whose society is undermined by gossip and whose school system is honeycombed with politics. Is this the promised joy of the intellectual life? Or suppose she sees the need of trained women in stenography, the quick accuracy of hand and brain which it demands, the intimate knowledge of business which it develops, the posts of responsibility to which it may lead. In her new enthusiasm she begins work at a business school. She finds there few fellow students whose ideals and tastes are hers; but she is there for work, not for companionship, and she keeps on. At last, unless she has exceptional fortune or uses exceptional care, she may find that, in a business office with a beginner's pay, with long hours and short vacations, she has much to bear from men who, whether they pass for gentlemen or not, are not gentlemen to her. How can she, with the refinement and the love of leadership which her intellectual life has fostered, endure a drudging inferiority to men whom she knows herself to be immeasurably above? A man must submit to it in the beginning; but a man is of coarser fibre. Besides, a man knows that hard and able work will bring a man's reward; whereas a woman knows that, partly because people are prejudiced but chiefly because men and women are eternally unlike, she can-

not hope for those positions which demand continuity of physical strength, grasp (not merely insight) in meeting large problems day after day, and unprotected association with all kinds of people. Women who can fill such positions are so few that we may pass them by. As the power, not on the throne but behind it, as the leaven that lifts men to higher things, as the standard of unselfishness, devotion, purity, and faith, women may at some time reform and transform the business world: but they will not often be good heads of business houses; they may be good physicians, but they will rarely be good lawyers; they may be, and often are, mentally and morally head and shoulders above the preachers to whom they listen with steady loyalty, but they will be better ministers' wives than ministers.

Or suppose a girl marries and keeps house. With the constant thought for her husband and children, with the constant details of a housekeeper's routine, how shall she feed her mind? Possibly her husband, in a dark little office all day, cannot feed his; but he is a man, and cares less. "Was all my training, then," she cries, "a training for servitude?"

How long it takes us to learn that "the word of God is not bound;" that what is enslaved in us is not the soul, which is our birthright, but a changeling that while we slept has stolen into its place; and that what enslaves is not the routine of life but the chafing at the routine! how long it takes us to see that every life without a light in it is dull, that no life with a light in it can be dull, and that whether the light is there or not is a matter of our own will! As we see deeper and

deeper into the complex sorrow of the world about us, we cannot be gay of heart, but we may and we should be happy; and in hard work lighted by hope and courage and love we may learn that the constancy of routine is the constancy of a friend. Life is sure to be complicated, and it may be sad: but to a right-minded man or woman there is one thing it can never be — it can never be uninteresting; and there is one thing it must always be — it must always be active. Moreover, in this activity every particle of learning or of training or of mere social experience that your college has given you is bound to tell. If whatever you do is not done more intelligently and more earnestly for your college education, the trouble is not in the college education but in you: you are the wrong kind of girl.

If you have to earn a living and begin at the bottom, make the bottom stronger because you are there. Then trust to time. So few workers in proportion to the whole number give themselves intelligently, loyally, and unreservedly to their immediate duty that if you thus give yourself you cannot but succeed. Thousands of people in small positions whine because their talents are thrown away — because their ability has no elbow-room. It is not elbow-room that they need; it is "elbow-grease;" it is energy and strength. Their very whining shows that they are too small for the places they are in now. When the right kind of person has too small a place, he does his work so well as to make the place bigger; people see in it more than they ever saw before. He who laments that an unappreciative world has slighted his talents is a more wicked and slothful servant than he who hides

his one talent in a napkin. Do your work and you will succeed. Your idea of success may be different from what it would be if you had not come to college. I should be sorry if it were not ; for these four years have brought you possessions which will transform your whole life.

Among these possessions is college loyalty. We sometimes forget that from the moment of our entering a college we have become a part of it, and it has become a part of us, inevitably and forever. We owe it money perhaps ; allegiance certainly and always. It is for us to keep our Alma Mater honored and wise and young. "We are all better Harvard men now," said the president of the Harvard Club of Chicago, "than when we were in college ;" and he was right. Much as you love Wellesley to-day, your love of her will deepen with the years and will take on more and more of the spirit of high romance till you yourselves will marvel at the magic of the Alma Mater's name. "This," as Chief Justice Holmes said of something else, "is that little touch of the superfluous which is necessary. Necessary as art is necessary and knowledge which serves no mechanical end. Superfluous only as glory is superfluous, or a bit of red ribbon that a man would die to win."

Besides drawing the breath of college loyalty, which may find expression in a thousand ways, the graduate should have achieved ability to look at more than one side of a question. Men who "know black and white but not gray" find much less discomfort and much more self-satisfaction than men who know gray in all

shades and to whom scarcely anything is unquestioned white or black. Men who see every object as if it lay between two walls, and see it clearly and see it hard, have less to keep them awake nights than men who know no walls and see every object as one part of a wide-spreading and complex universe; but only the latter can be wise. There is no wisdom without acute sensitiveness such as gives to any soul but the sublimely great varied and constant pain. Yet who would shrink from the pain of wider sympathy, of quicker discernment, of more abundant life? From the beginning, knowledge has brought its sorrow. Capacity for keener joy means capacity for sharper grief: without capacity for sharper grief there is no capacity for higher service; and the glory of the highest service was the Cross.

Whatever you do, do it heart and soul, but do not sell yourself to it: —

“Because a man has shop to mind
In time and place, since flesh must live,
Needs spirit lack all life behind,
All stray thoughts, fancies fugitive,
All loves except what trade can give?

.
But — shop each day and all day long!
Friend, your good angel slept, your star
Suffered eclipse, fate did you wrong!
From where these sorts of treasures are
There should our hearts be — Christ, how far!”

“The trouble with that man,” said one of our best university chemists of one of his best pupils, “is that he is nothing *but* a chemist.”

Yet we must not make shop one thing and life another; and since we must not make life shop, we must make shop life. Into everything we do we must try to put leaven. If asked for what college stands beyond all else, I should be tempted to say, "For the high meaning of the every-day act and the every-day life; for the beauty of work, of unselfish devoted work, with ambition to do the appointed task." If a higher task comes, take it as you took the lower — always with scrupulous fidelity and with that touch of something beyond mere accuracy which makes fidelity heroic. I have seen men and women filling subordinate positions with this kind of heroism — men and women whose lives, shut close as it seemed on every side, would have been arid as the sand if, in their hearts, they had not said, like Christian's daughter in "The Pilgrim's Progress," "I purpose never to have a clog to my soul."

I say all this because there was never greater need of that fidelity whereby the drudgery of daily life becomes transfigured. "Much of my life," said President Eliot once, "is what many persons would call drudgery. Within a few days I have gone through the entire salary list of the instructors and assistants in the university; and I do it every year." No one knows better than he that the president of a college or the president of a country is more slave than king, and that nowadays a king is a kind of slave. Success does not and cannot mean escape from work.

Yet on every side we see men demanding a full share of the luxuries of life and a decrease of its labor.

Eight hours of eager unremitting work may be enough for a mechanic or for a common laborer ; but how many give even that ? How a little or a good deal is shaved off each end of the day and off both sides of the middle ! how languidly and perfunctorily the task is done ! Street laborers, elbow to elbow, feebly lift their picks a few inches above the surface of the earth and trust the fall to the force of gravity ; washerwomen charge you by the hour for eating copious and frequent meals in your kitchen ; carpenters light their pipes over your sawdust and shavings and chat pleasantly at your expense with whoever passes by. “ Less work for more money ! ” is the constant cry ; and if the cost of living increases (as it must when everybody does less work for more money), less work and more money still. I have known a man hauling stone to leave a block in a crooked woods road where it wrecked the next carriage, because five o'clock had come and nothing (with an oath) should make him work after five o'clock. Mr. Charles Dudley Warner prophesies that, when labor gets to be ten dollars a day, the workmen will not come at all — “ they will send their cards.” Everywhere men proceed on the assumption that the ideal life is not to work at all and to be paid handsomely for not working. Yet there is no more elusive happiness than the happiness of not working. He who takes labor as self-respecting service which yields daily bread to him and his and which makes his life worth something is happy in his work and wants to do all the work he can ; he who takes it as a necessary evil is never happy in or out of it and is of small use in the world : —

"He is a swinward, but I think
No swinward of the best ;
For much he recketh of his swink
And carketh for his rest."

The college man or woman should learn that in an earnest world no loafer counts.

One of the most industrious and useful men I know has had no fixed occupation ; but he wastes less time than most professional men, and much less than most so-called laboring men. "It is only the laboring classes," some one has said, "who can afford an eight-hour day." He who goes to his work with the right spirit will soon find more work. His usefulness makes him known ; and he is unexpectedly called on for many kinds of service. "That's a good man," says Hawkins of Scott in Mr. Kipling's "William the Conqueror." "If all goes well, I shall work him hard." "This," the author adds, "was Jim Hawkins's notion of the highest compliment one human being could pay another." Not one of us has an excuse for becoming what Homer calls an ἄχθος ἀρούρης, a dead weight on the earth. Every college man or woman is in honor bound to be not disobedient to the heavenly vision, and, in the light of that vision, to lead a life of work.

But what of marriage? It was of proposed or suggested marriage, you remember, that Christian's daughter said what I have quoted — not of marriage in general, but of marriage with an alert, self-seeking, unprincipled man, like some of the so-called "hustlers" of to-day. Now I believe in marriage with all my heart ; and I believe in the marriage of educated women

— provided they marry the right men. I have heard it whispered that women often wonder at the kind of girls men marry. "Love is said to be blind," an American humorist remarked. "But," he added, "I know some fellows who see more in their girls than ever I could." Yet for every man who clogs his soul with a wife there must be several women who clog their souls with husbands. "It is astonishing," said a friend of mine, "how many women are willing to take upon themselves the support of inefficient men ;" if women knew what they should know, it would be more astonishing how many women and what good women will marry fast men. The woman of to-day should be sheltered from the evil of the world by every man who has chivalry in him ; but the educated woman of to-day should not be kept in ignorance of such evil as may come close to her own life and the lives of her nearest and dearest. There is no excuse for an education that suffers a clean-hearted girl to crown what she would call the "wild" life of her lover with a halo of romance. She should know just what such a life means before she consents to marry a man who leads or has led it. The fancied loss of refinement in her knowing is nothing to the loss of refinement that may result from her not knowing. I do not say that a woman is never justified in marrying such a man ; for she may be : I say that she should know what she is doing ; that the new physical and mental training of women should not suffer them to be in dark ignorance of the vital truths and the vital dangers in their very womanhood.

In speaking of the relation between women and men, I pass from morals to manners. The wonderful femininity of a girls' college may make girls sufficient unto themselves ; or it may make them overvalue men as men (a boys' college has corresponding dangers). Too often among the girls of to-day the new and healthy freedom of young women longs to exercise itself, not in the development of women as women, but in the assimilating of women to men. This assimilating belongs to modern life in general and not to college life in particular. In one of Miss Ferrier's novels a gentleman walking with two ladies in broad daylight gives an arm to each. A generation or two ago a gentleman who did not offer his arm to a lady in the evening would hardly have been a gentleman at all ; now (I say it with regret) a gentleman who does offer it is either rustic or old-fashioned. The girl of to-day has more independent manners and, happily, has along with them a freer life. She may ride a horse without an accompanying groom ; she may bestride a horse ; she may row and run and swim and take her part in a hundred athletic exercises without being one whit less a woman : but some things she had better leave to men. Fiercely competitive athletics have their dangers for men ; but they develop manly strength : for women their dangers are greater ; and the qualities that they tend to develop are not womanly. Outside of athletics, too, girls who imitate men are prone to imitate their inferiorities. I am so old-fashioned as to believe that girls who smoke cigarettes are degenerate ; that girls who use the rough language of men are, as some one has put it, "no

gentlemen ; ” and that even college girls who steal signs are thieves. I do not deny that the inborn right of woman to smoke cigarettes and steal signs is equal to that of man ; yet, if the sexes are to be equalized, I could wish it were by the refining of men and not by the vulgarizing of women. The modern girl whose early manners are moulded by “ Alice in Wonderland,” wherein everybody flatly contradicts everybody else, and who, as she grows up, meets constant temptation to masculine inferiority, runs the risk of losing that gentleness which is not merely one of her charms but one source of her strength.

When a man whom we have learned to respect tells a story such as men often tell among themselves, he is not quite the same man to us that he was before ; when women to whom we look for all that is pure and high fall short of the standard we have believed to be theirs, much of their power is gone forever. Is it just to expect of women more than we expect of men ? Possibly not just, but better than just. To hold either men or women responsible for the moral character of all persons with whom they deal — of all actors, for example, whom they see on the stage — would be worse than absurd ; yet it is a constant source of wonder to me what theatrical shows good women will go to, and will cheerfully discuss as the natural amusements of ladies and gentlemen. So, too, with reading. Some women, no doubt, do not care for Browning ; and some are ashamed to speak of him for fear they shall be called pedantic : yet few are ashamed to know all the transient novels of the day ; and some are chagrined if they

cannot keep abreast of the stories in the leading magazines, as some are troubled if they do not know what is going on at the principal theatres. You educated women can exert a vast influence on the reading taste of the next generation — against vulgarity and unscrupulousness in what is called “journalism ;” against novels and plays that tend to undermine the sacredness of marriage ; against plays in which low women drilled by lower men are the chief attraction : and you can exert this influence, not by public invectives which advertise and encourage what they condemn, not by ostentatious virtue, but by the quiet abstinence which assumes that those whom you love will love whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report ; not by the blind innocence of a child, but by the clear-seeing, intelligent earnestness of a woman who abhors that which is evil and cleaves to that which is good. In the days when you have to “make time ” for reading, read your newspaper to learn what is doing in the world, — not to learn that “the bride [whom you do not know] was charmingly gowned in white satin,” or that the divorced wife of some second-rate actor is expected to marry a Wall Street broker, or that the police have unearthed a new witness in the trial of Pietro Mazzi for the murder of his rival. There is much wisdom in that observation of Thoreau’s : “If we read of one man robbed, or murdered, or killed by accident, or one house burned, or one vessel wrecked, or one steamboat blown up, or one cow run over on the Western Railroad, or one mad dog killed, or one lot of grasshoppers in the winter — we never need read of another. One is enough. If

you are acquainted with the principle, what do you care for a myriad instances and applications ? ”

“ To read well,” says the same philosopher, “ that is, to read true books in a true spirit, is a noble exercise and one that will task the reader more than any exercise which the customs of the day esteem. It requires a training such as the athletes underwent.” Keep in training ; read daily if you can — and you nearly always can — a little of “ the best that has been known and thought in the world.” As some one has said, adapting the Scripture, “ Keep the windows open toward Jerusalem.” Learn some things by heart for dark and wakeful hours, and see how the poetry reveals itself more and more clearly, till the obscure is full of meaning and the great and high and simple has increased its own meaning tenfold. What are murder and millinery to such reading as this ?

Let us consider for what the intellectual life of a girls’ college chiefly stands: not for the belittling of those graceful accomplishments which add to the joy of life, but for something solid to which, if time serves, those accomplishments may be added ; not for what is called, almost in cant, self-development, unless self-development is to end in self-forgetfulness ; not for a life of exclusive specialization, which is too often an arid life ; not for such a reaction from over-femininity as shall lead to absorption in clubs and politics. It stands for the development, in a woman, of a clear-headed integrity which, when supported by her intuitive insight, makes her life the best human standard of right and wrong. The untrained woman sometimes

amazes us by such untruthfulness as would ostracize a man. An extreme example is Nora in Ibsen's "A Doll's House." When her husband is sick, she raises money to take him on a journey; and she raises it by forging a signature. Confronted with the charge of crime, she fails to see the point: "Do you mean to say that it was wrong to save my husband's life?"

Mr. Meredith, you may remember, in "Diana of the Crossways," makes his heroine, who is betrothed to a minister of state and has run heavily into debt entertaining him and his friends, sell to a newspaper a state secret he has given her overnight. This instance is hardly fair, since those of us who have watched Diana up to the fatal moment believe (we think we *know*) that such a woman could not do such an act, and suspect that her betrayal of the Honorable Percy is a *tour de force* of Mr. Meredith, who needs somehow to get the Honorable Percy out of the way and to clear the deck for Tom Redworth, the man of Mr. Meredith's choice; yet the mere fact that this novelist could make an upright and loyal and able woman do through mental confusion an act in itself so base is significant. Among the people who are intellectually rather than morally untruthful, who would tell the truth if they saw it but who cannot see it, there are, I am afraid, more women than men — women whose sense of history is intuitive and whose sense of present fact is more emotional than scientific. Even women who have set out to purify politics have proposed as matters of course such political schemes as no honest man would endure. Now college training does not stifle the emotional in

women ; but it may train women to see clearly and to speak accurately. The best poet is no less a poet for knowing how to write prose ; and the best training of the mind is no clog to the soul.

Girls' colleges were not created to make girls imitate men, even in their minds ; they were created to correct the weakness and to strengthen the strength of women as women. In purity of heart, in self-forgetful service, in spiritual insight, in nearly all that is devoted and deep and high, the women of civilized countries have advanced far beyond the men. If along with this advance there once sprang up in our weaker sisters the notion that timidity is pretty, that invalidism is interesting, and that uselessness is a charm, let us thank the century that has just closed for clearing the air. Let us thank the girls' colleges for their recognition of the claims of a girl's mind, for their strong common sense, for their ideals of womanhood. Now for good and now for evil, the power of women is everywhere in the land. Half the bad things done by men are done under the fascination of those women who draw men down ; nearly all the good things are done with the courage that men get from women who believe in them. As to public life, I am still so conservative as to hold that a political competition of both sexes is less likely to elevate men than to degrade women, and that the peculiar strength of refined and earnest womanhood is exercised in ways less public. I fear the loss of the best that is in woman — and, with it, the loss of a power that is hers and hers alone.

I have spoken too much of what women should not

do and have said little of what they can do — of what they must do if they are to fulfil the high possibilities of their lives. If I have rushed in where angels fear to tread, I have done it as one who loves and reverences good women beyond all else on earth. As sisters, as wives, as mothers, as friends, as helpers to all that is noble, you the educated women of this generation have a responsibility and an influence that should make you at once happy and grave — happy because of the limitless power for good that comes of doing day by day what must be done, and of seeing, even in the drudgery of it, “a light that never was on sea or land;” grave, lest in times of human weakness, you may turn from the light and may see only a sad and dull routine in a world of darkness and sorrow. In these hours, which may be only the reactionary consequence of the best work you have ever done — the nervous depression that follows nervous exaltation — learn to say with the old philosopher, “This too shall pass,” and learn to look, even at your own weariness, with the eyes of a poet. For I still believe that, though few women have been great poets, nearly every woman has, as part of her mission, putting poetry into life.

Going back to the rose and the cabbage, I may say that the college woman's business is not to scorn the cabbage but to invest it with a rose motive, to see the light that kindles the commonplace into everlasting truth. People talk a good deal about loss of dignity; but the one sure way of losing dignity is through constant fear of losing it. I like that story of President Roosevelt which says that as he travelled by coach

from his sister's country place to the Yale Bicentennial Celebration, he left the carriage and walked a while for exercise ; and, as he walked, he saw a farmer vainly trying to get his cows in ; and he sprang over the wall, drove the cows to the farmer, and ran back. The story, I fear, is fictitious ; but that people should believe it, is to the President's honor. His notion of dignity is his own and might not do for everybody ; nor would some other man's dignity make up in him for the loss of that informal and vigorous naturalness which endears him to all who know him and to thousands, to millions, who do not.

The college graduate who, as such, is too fastidious for any honest, helpful work has missed one of the best things that either college or Christianity can teach. Among the many sentences that stand by you in Mr. Kipling's "William the Conqueror," that wonderful story to which I have already referred, is Hawkins's remark when he is reproached for the kind of work he is giving Scott.

"He 's not a coolie," says the heroine wrathfully ; "he ought to be doing his regulation work."

"He 's the best man in the service," Hawkins answers, "and that 's saying a good deal ; but if you must use razors to cut grindstones, why, I prefer the best cutlery."

Every day of our lives we see fine steel put to coarse uses ; and sometimes we rebel at a world where such things can and must go on. We see quivering delicate lives dashing themselves, as it seems, against hard, unyielding wickedness ; and we cry out at the wrong.

We forget that it is sensitive men and women who can do the best work among men and women, because they and they only can understand hearts unlike their own; because they and they only can see the glory of the forbidding task. Even the same quality that without training makes them lose their heads enables them with training to walk steadily on the brink of precipices; the same quick apprehensiveness that makes them timid becomes, under control, a minister to the highest courage, enabling shrinking women to face death, and what is infinitely worse than death — apparently hopeless life. The poet Crashaw remembering the Christian martyrs cries, —

“ Oh that it were as it was wont to be
When Thy old friends of fire, all full of Thee,
Fought against frowns with smiles, gave glorious chase
To persecutions, and against the face
Of death and fiercest dangers, durst with brave
And sober pace march on to meet a grave.
On their bold breasts about the world they bore Thee,
And to the teeth of hell stood up to teach Thee ;
In centre of their inmost souls they wore Thee,
Where racks and torments strived in vain to reach Thee.”

Even in our own days we have seen a spirit as fine and high among educated men and women. As a child, I saw Governor Andrew review on Boston Common the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts, the first black regiment, whose white commander, scarcely more than a boy, Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, lives to-day in the hearts of Harvard men as the very flower of American knighthood, as the symbol of high idealism, of romantic loyalty to college and to country. Just before

the assault on Fort Wagner, a man who believes himself to be the last white man that ever talked with Robert Shaw, carried him a message :¹ —

“General Strong presents his compliments to Colonel Shaw and tells him that he expects the Fifty-fourth to do its duty.”

“Tell General Strong,” was the answer, “that the Fifty-fourth will immortalize itself” — “and,” says the soldier who took the message, “in half an hour he was among the immortals.”

“What has it all been for?” For the knowledge that makes life richer ; for the friendship that makes life sweeter ; for the training that brings power to the task which is hard and high ; for the wisdom that suffers and triumphs and is strong ; for the vision that shall light your way like a pillar of fire ; for the truth that shall make you free.

¹ This story is told by President Thwing of Western Reserve University, who heard it from the messenger.

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